

Department of Industrial Relations
NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE

October 31, 1952

MEMORANDUM

TO: MR. ROY NORRIS

From: Julius A. Thomas, Director

Subj: BUCKS COUNTY MEMORANDUM

In line with our conversation yesterday and my memorandum regarding the forthcoming meeting at Bucks County, I wonder if you would be good enough to prepare the basic document to be used in connection with this operation. By "basic document" I mean the essential information which should be available to the committee. I suspect that we will do a committee job on the final content of the document. As I see it, we should talk about the following obvious items:

1. The Whole Question of Housing in the Area

a. The Levittown Project

Do we understand that Negroes will not be acceptable under any circumstance in the Levittown Project? Do we have evidence that Negroes have applied or have attempted to apply for either purchase or rental of the Levittown houses without success? Do we have any official statement from Mr. Levitt or his representatives in connection with policy in the project?

b. Fairless Hills

How much do we know about the probable policies of the Fairless Hills Project? Have we any evidence that Negroes will or will not be acceptable in this project? Can we document any of this evidence? Has there been any official statement of policy in this respect from the builders or operators of the Fairless Hills development?

c. Segregated Housing for Negroes

In one of your reports, you referred to the rumor that a construction firm has acquired sites and plans to build houses especially for Negroes. Have we any additional information on this report?

2. Employment

- a. Several of your reports have referred to construction employment in the Bucks County area. How much specific information have we been able to assemble in this connection? Do we have any evidence that there has been racial discrimination in this phase of the project? What information have we been able to obtain from the Pennsylvania Employment Service or representatives of any of the unions in the area in connection with construction employment?

3. Production Workers

- a. The NEW YORK TIMES announced this week that very shortly production can be started at the plant. Mr. Moore says that this newspaper story is premature because there are many things to be done before production can begin. Have we obtained any reliable information regarding the production schedule? Have we been able to get any kind of positive statement regarding the employment of Negro workers for production jobs? Have we been able to secure any reliable information about the availability of Negro workers? I am assuming that there are no white-collar workers on the project, and I am wondering if we know whether or not any qualified people have attempted to secure employment in Bucks County.

4. Welfare Services

Undoubtedly, there will be considerable expansion in all kinds of public and private welfare services in this new community. I understand that some of it will be financed with the aid of federal funds. Is there any information available about such plans as have been considered in this connection? What about hospitals, schools, recreation services, privately operated recreation and other services such as eating and hotel services? I know some of these things have not been thoroughly investigated, and it is doubtful that we can furnish a great deal of documented material on them. However, this whole field should be thoroughly discussed so that policies can be worked out in accordance with our own thinking. Certainly we will be pointing to U. S. Steel that we do not want a repetition of the Oak Ridge development or the Pasco-Kennewick operation in the State of Washington.

If you think this can be done in the next two or three days, will you let me know? We are hoping that Mrs. Jacobs, Mr. Rockefeller, Mr. Dowling, Mr. Felt and possibly other members of the Board can join us in this conference with U. S. Steel. We should supply them with sufficient information to carry the ball in much of the discussion. I have already discussed it with Mrs. Jacobs, and she has gone to work on our plans to have a meeting of the committee prior to the November 17 meeting.